

Thursday, December 11, 2008

From the Coeur d'Alene Press

- No new education news stories posted online today.

From the Spokesman-Review

- More teachers earned certification
- Former Idaho justice to head law school

From the Moscow Pullman Daily News (password required)

- Program shake-up, cuts confuse UI faculty
- Kibbie Dome project could affect spring commencement
- OUR VIEW: Gates sends message with community college grants (Editorial)

From the Lewiston Tribune (password required)

- Final University Place suit settled
- Silak selected to head new law school

From the Idaho-Press Tribune, Nampa

- No new education news stories posted online today.

From the Idaho Statesman

- No new education news stories posted online today.

From the Twin Falls Times-News

- School district interested in auctioning land
- Cathy Silak named Concordia law school dean

From the Idaho State Journal (password Required)

- ISU may tweak requirements
- Cathy Silak Named Dean of Concordia Law School

From the Idaho Falls Post Register (password required)

- D93 bond OK'd
- New Idaho law school names dean

FROM THE COEUR D'ALENE PRESS

No new education news stories posted online today.

FROM THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

More teachers earned certification

National standards program a yearlong process
From Staff Reports
December 11, 2008

Teachers throughout Eastern Washington and North Idaho recently learned their investments of time and money have paid off with certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

National certification is a year-long process for seasoned teachers, requiring hundreds of hours of additional work and an application fee of \$2,500. In Washington, only about 5 percent of teachers are certified, including the 900 who were added to the list Tuesday, when the National Board released the names of those who completed the process last year.

Teachers say the process requires them to be more reflective.

"You spend a lot of time thinking about your own teaching, why you teach, why something didn't work (in the classroom) and how would I do it differently next time," said Shane Heideman, a science teacher at Kettle Falls Middle Schools and the first in his district to become nationally certified.

The reward for teachers who gain certification: a \$5,000 pay raise, plus an additional \$5,000 annually if the teacher works at a school that serves impoverished areas.

On Wednesday, The Spokesman-Review published the names of 62 recently certified teachers from Spokane and Kootenai counties. Here are those from other counties:

In Washington

Othello School District – Paul Firth, Scott McBride, Steven Parris, Eric Shafer and Chad Smith; Orient School District – Gretchen Cruden and Cheryl Metsker-Belcher; Newport School District – Curtis Rowsey; Colville School District – Gail Herbst; Columbia School District in Hunters – Michele Nelson; Kettle Falls School District – Shane Heideman; Mary Walker School District in Springdale – Rebecca Gearhart; Dennis Kiefer and Wendy Peone; Colton School District – Catherine Kinzer; Pullman School District – Joni Stevens and Robert Winchell.

In Idaho

Moscow School District – Judy Mock and Brenda Tribelhorn.

Former Idaho justice to head law school

Silak

Jessie L. Bonner
Associated Press
December 11, 2008

BOISE – A private Lutheran university has named former Idaho Supreme Court Justice Cathy Silak dean of the law school it expects to open in Boise in 2010.

The board that governs Concordia University in Portland picked Silak, one of only two women to serve on Idaho's high court and the first female judge appointed to the Idaho Court of Appeals, from among 50 candidates.

"Cathy rose to the top pretty quickly," Concordia President Charles Schlimpert said Wednesday in Boise.

Silak offers a familiar public face to plans by the private Oregon university to open a law school in two years. Part of her job will be to help nail down the rest of the \$7 million Concordia needs before it can enroll students.

"She's extraordinarily passionate about starting this law school," Concordia Vice President Gary Withers said.

Silak, 58, was on the high court for seven years, losing her seat in 2000. She served on the bench with former Idaho Supreme Court Chief Justice Linda Copple Trout, who is backing the University of Idaho's plans to expand its law school in Boise.

The Moscow-based university wants to expand its law school by adding a full-fledged branch campus 300 miles south in the state capital. Concordia announced late last year that it wanted to open a three-year law school in Boise.

FROM THE MOSCOW PULLMAN DAILY NEWS (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

Program shake-up, cuts confuse UI faculty

Some don't understand difference between budget reductions, program prioritization process
By Yesenia Amaro, Daily News staff writer

Posted on: Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Some University of Idaho faculty members are confused about the difference between state-mandated budget cuts and the university's academic prioritization process.

UI Faculty Council Chairwoman Karen Guilfoyle said she has spoken to people around campus who think the budget cuts and program shake-up are one and the same.

"I think that (President Steven Daley-Laursen) has really tried to keep those separate," she said Tuesday during a Faculty Council meeting.

With state revenue lagging behind expectations, Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter recently ordered the UI to cut just under \$3 million from its current budget and hold another \$2 million in reserves. Those reductions come on top of a previous cut of nearly \$1 million, and the UI also has already held back about \$1.5 million in reserves.

The university independently decided to re-evaluate its academic programming in September. Some programs could be eliminated to save the university money for use in other, more strategic areas.

Faculty council member Sharon Fritz said she also has heard of confusion among faculty members, who don't understand how some faculty positions won't be eliminated during the academic prioritization process.

"From what I have been hearing ... maybe we are being naive that faculty can't be cut in this process," she said.

Faculty council member Ed Schmeckpeper agreed, saying it will be difficult to absorb faculty members whose programs have been cut into another area.

"If we are truly committed to cut programs, that says that we are truly committed to cutting staff," he said.

Guilfoyle said faculty members in programs that are cut will be integrated into other programs to make them stronger.

UI Provost Doug Baker said there are two pieces to the puzzle.

"One, is that we have some immediate fiscal issues that we have to address because of the governor's holdback," he said. "But there is also a process to re-examine the institution, reshape the institution so that we can implement our strategic plan and be a vibrant and important university in the future."

Baker said the "budget storm" that the university is experiencing is something the entire country is facing, and it just happens to be affecting the university as it implements its strategic plan. He plans to have a better idea of which programs will be cut in mid-January.

Guilfoyle said even the faculty council is confused about the differences. She suggested the council meet with college deans, possibly next week, to learn more about the academic prioritization process.

She said it would benefit the council and faculty members if more information about the process were shared.

Yesenia Amaro can be reached at (208) 882-5561, ext. 237, or by e-mail at yamaro@dnnews.com.

Kibbie Dome project could affect spring commencement

By Yesenia Amaro, Daily News staff writer

Posted on: Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Improvements to the University of Idaho Kibbie Dome are putting the crimp on spring commencement plans.

UI Commencement Committee Chairman Kenton Bird informed the faculty council Tuesday that construction on the Kibbie Dome is tentatively scheduled to begin in March so the facility can be ready for the 2009 football season in August.

Last week, the Idaho State Board of Education authorized \$10 million in life-safety improvements for the Kibbie Dome. The UI plans to take out a short-term construction loan from Wells Fargo to finance the project.

Bird said contingency plans are being considered for the UI's spring commencement ceremony, scheduled for May 16.

The UI Events Office has identified three potential locations for the ceremony if the Kibbie Dome is not available.

The locations include an outdoor practice field on the east side of the Kibbie Dome, which would require construction of a canopy over the stage and temporary flooring under seats for the audience. The field would accommodate the number of people expected to attend the ceremony, but there would be no canopy over the audience and inclement weather could pose a problem.

Bird said another option is moving the commencement ceremony to Beasley Coliseum at Washington State University. The biggest obstacle to that option is the coliseum is not available May 16.

This means the commencement would have to take place on a Sunday, "which provides all sorts of complications to graduates and their families," Bird said.

The third location is to use the Kibbie Dome central section-south concourse, which is used for the annual Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival and can accommodate about 4,000 spectators, with 400 to 500 graduates seated on the floor.

Bird said Brian Johnson, assistant vice president for facilities, suggested this option should be viewed as a last-case scenario.

UI Faculty Council member Sharon Fritz strongly recommended keeping the commencement somewhere in Moscow and on a Saturday.

The university can look at other options in Moscow like the Moscow High School auditorium or some of the local churches, Bird said.

Bird told the faculty council he will be taking suggestions until Monday, when he meets with President Steven Daley-Laursen. The president will make the ultimate decision sometime in January.

OUR VIEW: Gates sends message with community college grants (Editorial)

By Murf Raquet, for the editorial board

Posted on: Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Bill Gates is sending a message that should be loud and clear to those legislators and lobbyists who determine how higher education dollars are spent - don't neglect the two-year schools.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is giving \$69 million to the nation's 1,200 community colleges.

Two-year schools are a critical part of the higher education spectrum. They successfully serve a demonstrated need by stretching dollars and eliminating frills.

The grant money, which is the initial donation, will be used to encourage more young adults to pursue post-secondary degrees or certificates before starting a family, according to an Associated Press story.

The grant speaks volumes about the worth of community college education.

The two-year degree is marketable, often bringing the graduate thousands of dollars in additional income per year.

A degree or certificate often means someone is able to afford to start a family rather than rely on minimum-wage jobs and public assistance.

The Gates Foundation and other charitable organizations plan to give more than \$500 million to community colleges in the next five years. They hope to double the number of low-income adults who get a degree or certificate by age 26.

That's an admirable goal and, now, a well-funded one.

Community colleges traditionally struggle more than their four-year cousins for scarce state funding.

Those who have a hand on the state and federal purse strings need to take note of the foundation's motives.

This is not a waste of money.

In addition to scholarships, the grant money will be used to research and promote job-training programs, support outreach programs to target low-income families, and to find ways to support college students in areas such as child care, housing and transportation.

Gates and his associates see a tremendous value in what they are doing for the nation's community colleges.

We hope some of the far-sightedness rubs off on those we elect to make similar decisions.

FROM THE LEWISTON TRIBUNE (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

Final University Place suit settled

UI Foundation is responsible for making payments on parking garage at failed Boise campus project

By Joel Mills

Thursday, December 11, 2008

MOSCOW - The Idaho Supreme Court ruled Wednesday the University of Idaho Foundation is obligated to make a \$350,000 annual payment on the parking garage at the Idaho Water Center.

The lawsuit is the sole remaining bone of contention between the foundation and Civic Partners, the development firm it contracted to build the multi-building University Place campus in Boise.

University Place imploded when the Idaho State Building Authority declined to support its financing in 2002. Only the Water Center, which was already under construction, was

completed. The deal cost the foundation \$28 million in predevelopment costs when the balance of the project was canceled in 2003.

Christopher Pooser, an attorney for Civic Partners in Boise, said through the lawsuit, the foundation was trying to get out of its obligation to make the annual payment.

"They made a number of arguments, that it was an agreement to agree, that there were material terms of the contract that had not been negotiated," Pooser said. "The courts just rejected each one of those, and found that yes, indeed, the foundation did agree to make the payment, and is obligated to do so."

Attorneys for the foundation could not be immediately reached on Wednesday. But University of Idaho General Counsel Kent Nelson said the parking garage dispute is the last piece of litigation stemming from University Place.

Nelson was unsure, however, if Wednesday's Supreme Court opinion affirming an earlier District Court ruling completely resolved the lawsuit.

J. Walter Sinclair, another attorney for Civic Partners in Boise, said the UI - not the foundation - has agreed to make the annual payment as part of the operating cost of the Water Center.

"So as long as they continue to pay the money, the foundation won't have to," Sinclair said. "But if they should ever fail to pay the money, then the foundation has to."

Pooser said the original contract required the foundation to make the annual payment because it was a tax-exempt entity. As such, the project lost the tax increment financing a taxable company would have paid Capital City Development Company, Boise's redevelopment agency.

Therefore, the foundation was obligated to replace the lost tax increment that was to pay the 30-year bonds used to pay for the parking garage, Pooser said.

"Civic (Partners) passed that obligation along to the foundation, and the foundation agreed to fulfill that obligation," he said.

A portion of the \$350,000 is paid through the lease rates of Water Center tenants, Pooser said.

Silak selected to head new law school

Concordia expects to open in Boise in 2010 with former Idaho high court justice as dean

Associated Press

Thursday, December 11, 2008

BOISE - A private Lutheran university has named former Idaho Supreme Court Justice Cathy Silak dean of the law school it expects to open in Boise in 2010.

The board that governs Concordia University in Portland, Ore., picked Silak, one of only two women to serve on Idaho's high court and the first female judge appointed to the Idaho Court of Appeals, from among 50 candidates.

"Cathy rose to the top pretty quickly," Concordia President Charles Schlimpert said Wednesday in Boise.

Silak offers a familiar public face to plans by the private Oregon university to open a law school here in two years. Part of her job will be to help nail down the rest of the \$7 million Concordia needs before it can enroll students.

"She's extraordinarily passionate about starting this law school," said Concordia Vice President Gary Withers.

Silak, 58, was on the high court for seven years, losing her seat in 2000. She served on the bench with former Idaho Supreme Court Chief Justice Linda Copple Trout, who is backing the University of Idaho's plans to expand its law school in Boise.

Trout is a graduate of the Idaho College of Law and chairs the UI law school advisory committee.

The Moscow-based university wants to expand its law school by adding a full-fledged branch campus 300 miles south in the state capital. Concordia announced late last year that it wanted to open a three-year law school in Boise.

The Idaho Board of Education significantly scaled back the UI proposal to include only third-year law students and agreed to ask the Legislature for the \$1 million the university will initially need to expand at a Boise branch.

At its August meeting, board member Rod Lewis said he couldn't tell whether the plan was geared toward improving the quality of legal education in Idaho, or being the first law school in the Boise market.

"We do not want to make this a competition," Schlimpert said.

Concordia, a private liberal arts college, can act more quickly than a public university that needs approval from the state, Schlimpert said.

Silak most recently worked as president of the Idaho Community Foundation in Boise, which helps secure grants to fund philanthropic projects statewide.

Concordia has \$1.5 million committed to the law school and wants to get about \$3 million more by early next year. Part of Silak's job will be to secure the total \$7 million needed to open the school.

"This is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country without a law school," said Silak, who has lived in the Boise region for 25 years. "It's just a great setting."

FROM THE IDAHO-PRESS TRIBUNE, NAMPA

No new education news stories posted online today.

FROM THE IDAHO STATESMAN

No new education news stories posted online today.

FROM THE TWIN FALLS TIMES-NEWS

School district interested in auctioning land

By Ben Botkin
Times-News writer

Twin Falls School District officials are interested in auctioning land adjacent to the new Canyon Ridge High School now under construction.

The school district has two parcels of land that will be sold. The land is at the corner of Washington Street and Cheney Drive, which is under construction, and also at North College Road and Parkview Drive.

The school board on Monday heard a presentation from Randy Musser, an auctioneer with Musser Bros. Auctioneers in Twin Falls. Auctioneers do more than rattle off numbers to the highest bidder, Musser said.

Finding bidders is also part of the work that would go into preparing for an auction, he said.

"The most important part of an auction is the marketing that takes place prior to an auction," Musser said.

His company, if hired, would market and advertise the property on a regional scale to find interested buyers, he said.

The Wal-Mart being built nearby provides another selling point that could make the property valuable, Musser said.

Auctions provide transparency to the selling process, and that's another benefit, especially for a public entity like a school district, he said.

The presentation on Monday was for informational purposes, not to negotiate a deal.

The school board will meet again with the auctioning company in January to talk more about selling the land and a timeline, said Superintendent Wiley Dobbs.

Cathy Silak named Concordia law school dean

By JESSIE L. BONNER

BOISE, Idaho - A private Lutheran university has named former Idaho Supreme Court Justice Cathy Silak dean of the law school it expects to open in Boise in 2010.

The board that governs Concordia University in Portland, Ore., picked Silak, one of only two women to serve on Idaho's high court and the first female judge appointed to the Idaho Court of Appeals, from among 50 candidates.

"Cathy rose to the top pretty quickly," Concordia President Charles Schlimpert said Wednesday in Boise.

Silak offers a familiar public face to plans by the private Oregon university to open a law school here in two years. Part of her job will be to help nail down the rest of the \$7 million Concordia needs before it can enroll students.

"She's extraordinarily passionate about starting this law school," said Concordia Vice President Gary Withers.

Silak, 58, was on the high court for seven years, losing her seat in 2000. She served on the bench with former Idaho Supreme Court Chief Justice Linda Copple Trout, who is backing the University of Idaho's plans to expand its law school in Boise.

Trout is a graduate of the Idaho College of Law and chairs the UI law school advisory committee.

The Moscow-based university wants to expand its law school by adding a full-fledged branch campus 300 miles south in the state capital. Concordia announced late last year that it wanted to open a three-year law school in Boise.

The Idaho Board of Education significantly scaled back the UI proposal to include only third-year law students and agreed to ask the Legislature for the \$1 million the university will initially need to expand at a Boise branch.

At its August meeting, board member Rod Lewis said he couldn't tell whether the plan was geared toward improving the quality of legal education in Idaho, or being the first law school in the Boise market.

"We do not want to make this a competition," Schlimpert said.

Concordia, a private liberal arts college, can act more quickly than a public university that needs approval from the state, Schlimpert said.

Silak most recently worked as president of the Idaho Community Foundation in Boise, which helps secure grants to fund philanthropic projects statewide.

Concordia has \$1.5 million committed to the law school and wants to get about \$3 million more by early next year. Part of Silak's job will be to secure the total \$7 million needed to open the school.

"This is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country without a law school," said Silak, who has lived in Boise region for 25 years. "It's just a great setting."

A service of the Associated Press(AP)

FROM THE IDAHO STATE JOURNAL (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

ISU may tweak requirements

General ed classes could be reduced

BY YANN RANAIVO
yranaivo@journalnet.com

POCATELLO — Idaho State University is considering a plan to reduce the number of general education classes students must take to graduate. ISU President Arthur Vailas suggested the idea as one of several cost-saving measures the university could take in light of recently announced state budget holdbacks. But faculty members in charge of academics started discussing the concept before Vailas assumed his post in 2006.

Stephen Adkison, the associate provost of academic programming and an English professor, said the university's accreditation body has suggested an in-depth review of general education coursework be completed by next fall.

To fulfill their general education requirements, all ISU undergraduates must complete between 46 and 50 credits outside of their degree curriculum. In all, students must earn 128 credits to graduate.

Adkison said the first priority for faculty members this school year was to evaluate general education courses. By the end of this school year or early next school year, they hope to present an assessment of the adequacy of the current general education requirements. The assessment is being conducted under the direction of ISU's Curriculum Council, which will present a report to the Faculty Senate. The council will then accept feedback and write a final report based on those responses to present to the Faculty Senate for full approval.

Adkison said the assessment will also answer in-depth questions about what a student should expect to learn by taking general education classes.

He also sent a memo that included the accreditation body's previous evaluation of ISU done in 2004. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities wrote that ISU had "no systematic assessment" of the results it expects to generate from general coursework.

"We've had anecdotal evidence that we have too much (general education courses), but we haven't had systematic evidence to suggest ways that we need to change," Adkison said. "ISU's never had a problem with accreditation, but the demands and needs (of students) change. And this is a response to that kind of change."

Vailas, who mentioned cutting general education during an open faculty forum Friday, said there have been talks about reducing the coursework by a few credit hours.

Adkison said the current general education curriculum hasn't been updated for about two decades.

"The basic structure is going to continue serving our students well, but we need to tweak it," Adkison said. "And I'm pretty sure that we'll tweak it, not (fully) change it."

Adkison believes reducing general coursework will boost student retention and ease workloads.

"It could be easier in theory for students to complete their general education requirements and move into their major's courses," he said. "Having (general courses) that are too long delays that movement into the majors."

Adkison expects the process of updating ISU's general education requirements will conclude late in the spring.

iSu gRaduation RequiReMentS

Undergraduate students are required to complete 128 credit hours to graduate.

Required general education coursework can vary depending on a student's major.

General education courses are required classes that are not part of a student's major.

Cathy Silak Named Dean of Concordia Law School

A private Lutheran university has named former Idaho Supreme Court Justice Cathy Silak dean of the law school it expects to open in Boise in 2010.

The board that governs Concordia University in Portland, Ore., picked Silak, one of only two women to serve on Idaho's high court and the first female judge appointed to the Idaho Court of Appeals, from among 50 candidates.

“Cathy rose to the top pretty quickly,” Concordia President Charles Schlimpert said Wednesday in Boise.

Silak offers a familiar public face to plans by the private Oregon university to open a law school here in two years. Part of her job will be to help nail down the rest of the \$7 million Concordia needs before it can enroll students.

“She’s extraordinarily passionate about starting this law school,” said Concordia Vice President Gary Withers.

Silak, 58, was on the high court for seven years, losing her seat in 2000. She served on the bench with former Idaho Supreme Court Chief Justice Linda Copple Trout, who is backing the University of Idaho’s plans to expand its law school in Boise.

Trout is a graduate of the Idaho College of Law and chairs the UI law school advisory committee.

The Moscow-based university wants to expand its law school by adding a full-fledged branch campus 300 miles south in the state capital. Concordia announced late last year that it wanted to open a three-year law school in Boise.

The Idaho Board of Education significantly scaled back the UI proposal to include only third-year law students and agreed to ask the Legislature for the \$1 million the university will initially need to expand at a Boise branch.

At its August meeting, board member Rod Lewis said he couldn’t tell whether the plan was geared toward improving the quality of legal education in Idaho, or being the first law school in the Boise market.

“We do not want to make this a competition,” Schlimpert said.

Concordia, a private liberal arts college, can act more quickly than a public university that needs approval from the state, Schlimpert said.

Silak most recently worked as president of the Idaho Community Foundation in Boise, which helps secure grants to fund philanthropic projects statewide.

Concordia has \$1.5 million committed to the law school and wants to get about \$3 million more by early next year. Part of Silak’s job will be to secure the total \$7 million needed to open the school.

FROM THE IDAHO FALLS POST REGISTER (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

D93 bond OK'd

The \$25 million bond will be used to build an elementary school, improve safety and buy land.
By SAMANTHA PAK spak@postregister.com

Patrons of Bonneville Joint School District 93 approved a \$25 million bond Wednesday night.

The bond passed with 68.9 percent support from the 2,363 people who cast ballots, exceeding the two-thirds majority required by state law.

The bond will help build a new elementary school, pay for improvements throughout the district and be used to purchase land for future school sites.

"I'm very pleased because the high majority of people that came out to vote wanted the bond to pass," District Superintendent Chuck Shackett said.

Officials said they needed a new school because of growth in the district. About 450 new students showed up for school this year, according to School Board Chairman Craig Lords, and if current growth rates continue, the district will double its student population in 10 years.

Also, the district is housing students in 28 temporary trailers because it doesn't have enough classroom space.

"This is a nice vote for us," Lords said. "We need the school or we wouldn't have asked for it."

The new school is expected to be built southeast of Woodland Hill Elementary School by 2010.

Wednesday's final count came in a few hours after the polls closed. District officials had to check the validity of five votes that Shackett said weren't on the registration list.

Shackett said that even without those votes -- which were all yes votes -- the bond still would have passed, but the district wanted to make sure the votes were valid so they wouldn't need to hold another election.

This marks the third time in less than five years taxpayers have voted yes on District 93 bond proposals.

With each bond, Shackett said, fewer people have come out to vote and the bonds have passed by a smaller margin.

In 2004, 3,195 people voted. Two years later, 2,411 showed up for the election. This year, that count dwindled to 2,363, despite the district taping a "get out the vote" telephone call from former state Sen. Mel Richardson and sending it to 10,000 homes.

Shackett said declining turnout could be attributed to people who want the bond to pass, assumed it would and didn't bother to vote. He said people who didn't want it to pass likely continued to go out and vote.

The big question has been whether the bond would mean a tax increase for patrons. Bonneville officials say the bond wouldn't affect the levy rate patrons currently pay. Other factors, such as property values, could impact the levy rate.

But Shackett said that despite the economic downturn, growth in eastern Idaho should allow the district to keep the levy rate flat and even pay the bond off before its 20-year-life expires.

The district, Shackett said, hopes to pay it off in 12 to 15 years. He said the district wouldn't be pushing the bond if it believed a tax increase would be the result.

"The worst case for us is we're going to have to stretch it out to 20 years," Shackett said.

Education reporter Samantha Pak can be reached at 542-6750.

New Idaho law school names dean

BOISE (AP) -- A private Lutheran university has named former Idaho Supreme Court Justice Cathy Silak dean of the law school it expects to open in Boise in 2010.

The board that governs Concordia University in Portland, Ore., picked Silak, one of only two women to serve on Idaho's high court and the first female judge appointed to the Idaho Court of Appeals, from among 50 candidates.

Silak offers a public face to plans by the private university to open a law school here in two years. Part of her job will be to help nail down the rest of the \$7 million Concordia needs before it can enroll students.

Silak, 58, was on the high court for seven years, losing her seat in 2000. She served on the bench with former Idaho Supreme Court Chief Justice Linda Copple Trout, who is backing the University of Idaho's plans to expand its law school in Boise.